

home runs. Lovingly mown to baseball fans throughout the world as "A-Rod," Mr. Rodriguez exemplifies the great contributions Dominican-Americans continue to make to this Nation.

Born in New York, and raised in Miami, Mr. Rodriguez displayed his baseball talents early in life. He attended Miami's Westminster Christian High School, which went on to win the national baseball championship his junior year. During that time, he earned several prestigious awards, including USA Baseball Junior Player of the Year and Gatorade's National Student-Athlete of the Year. Mr. Rodriguez was also the first high-school player to try out for Team USA in 1993.

Today, Mr. Rodriguez is considered one of the best baseball players of all time. Proudly wearing #13 for my beloved New York Yankees, Mr. Rodriguez has become a legend to all prospective baseball players and fans. He has earned two American League Most Valuable Player (MVP) awards and has accomplished several noteworthy feats. For example, among all baseball players at the age of 30, Mr. Rodriguez ranks first in both home runs and runs scored, third in runs batted in (RBIs) and fourth in hits compared to other players at that point in their careers. Mr. Rodriguez also shares the record for most home runs in one month, hitting fourteen in April 2007. Mr. Rodriguez is also the third member of the exclusive 40-40 Club, composed of baseball players who accumulate a total of both 40 home runs and 40 stolen bases in a single season. These are just a few of the many accomplishments of this legendary baseball player.

Off the baseball field, Mr. Rodriguez is actively involved in his communities, from Miami to New York to the land of his parents, the Dominican Republic. For example, in 1998, he established the Alex Rodriguez Evening Benefit for the All Stars, which, up to this point, has raised more than half a million dollars for the Boys and Girls Club of Miami. In 2003, Mr. Rodriguez donated \$3.9 million to the University of Miami to remodel the university's baseball stadium and to provide scholarships to deserving students. In 2005, Mr. Rodriguez donated \$200,000 to the Children's Aid Society in New York and \$50,000 to the Dominican Republic branch of UNICEF, which fully funded five day-care centers outside of Santo Domingo for 1 year. These are only a handful of the many ways in which Mr. Rodriguez contributes to the development and success of our communities.

Madam Speaker, A-Rod is truly a shining star and a role model to us all both on and off the baseball field. I will continue to cheer him on as he breaks more records on his way to greatness. I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this fine athlete on the occasion of his 500th home run.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FOREWARN ACT OF 2007

HON. JOHN M. McHUGH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 25, 2007

Mr. McHUGH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Forewarn Act of 2007, which is designed to help American workers by im-

proving the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act (P.L. 100-379).

The WARN Act became effective nearly two decades ago in February 1989. Very simply, Congress rightly decided that it was good policy to ensure that workers receive 60 days advance notice of mass lay-offs and closures to facilitate their efforts to find a new job, obtain retraining, or otherwise prepare for the consequences of their employer's decision. Likewise, through the WARN Act, Congress required that the same 60-day notice be provided to state dislocated worker entities and the chief elected official of the pertinent local government to enhance their ability to respond to the situation and provide effective assistance.

I had the occasion to thoroughly review the WARN Act earlier this year when the General Motors (GM) Corporation unfortunately decided to phase out 500 jobs and close its Powertrain facility in Massena, New York, which I represent. As I have mentioned previously, it is difficult to overstate how important the plant's \$31 million annual payroll was to the local economy and how devastating GM's decision was to its employees, their families, and the residents of St. Lawrence and Franklin counties.

Despite the magnitude of this decision's impact upon my constituents, GM did not provide me with any advance notice. In fairness to GM, there was no legal requirement under the WARN Act that GM provide me with such notice, which I found to be unfortunate as it limits and even precludes opportunities to attempt to provide any and all assistance that could possibly prevent a closure or mass lay-off and the corresponding loss of jobs. In the event that the closure or mass lay-off is unavoidable, adequate advance notice allows elected representatives to begin taking actions to assist the individuals and community as they transition.

Accordingly, the Forewarn Act would expand the WARN Act's notice requirements to include the U.S. Senators and Representatives, as well as state senators and representatives who represent the area in which the facility is located. In addition, the Forewarn Act would require that notice be provided to the affected state's governor, as well as to the U.S. Secretary of Labor. As the intent of this notice is to allow elected officials to attempt to provide assistance, the amount of notice would be expanded from 60 to 90 days.

Additionally, the Forewarn Act would also increase the notice requirement for employers with 50 or more employees to 90 calendar days. By doing so, the Forewarn Act would enhance employees' ability to adjust to their change in job status. The Forewarn Act would also redefine mass lay-off to cover lay-offs of at least 25 employees who account for one-third of an employer's workforce or mass lay-offs of at least 100 employees.

To ensure compliance, the Forewarn Act would increase the back pay penalty; workers would receive 2 days pay multiplied by the number of calendar days short of 90 that the employer gives notice. Likewise, the Forewarn Act would allow the U.S. Secretary of Labor or the appropriate state attorney general to bring a civil action on behalf of employees and require the Secretary of Labor to provide educational materials concerning employees' rights and employer responsibilities.

It has been nearly two decades since the WARN Act was enacted. In that time, our na-

tion's economy has changed markedly as U.S. firms have restructured their operations to adjust to an increasingly competitive global marketplace. It is time to revisit and retol the WARN Act, and with the introduction of the Forewarn Act, I invite my colleagues to join with me in doing so.

HONORING FORMER
CONGRESSMAN CHARLES VANIK

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 25, 2007

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to join Congressman KLEIN in support of a resolution honoring former Congressman Charles Vanik. Charlie was a dedicated public servant and a great man. From 1955 to 1981, he served the people of northern Ohio with distinction and is an exemplary example for those of us in public office of what it means to be a true representative of the people.

It is hard to say whether Charlie was best known for his signature black suits and bowties or his sponsorship of the now famous Jackson-Vanik amendment to the 1974 Trade Reform Bill. The former made him instantly recognizable throughout northern Ohio and in the corridors of Capitol Hill. The latter, which tied the former Soviet Union's trade status to whether it freely allowed Jewish emigration, allowed thousands of families to escape religious persecution. I personally will always remember Charlie for his strong work ethic and his tireless defense of the American working and middle class.

Charlie spent his 26 years in Congress pursuing policies that gave the American people opportunities to achieve their dreams and rejecting those that allowed corporations to dodge taxes and shirk their responsibilities to their employees. He was so adamant about representing the people instead of interest groups that, after winning reelection in 1970, he vowed to never accept campaign contributions again. Charlie was beholden to no one for his congressional seat except the people of northern Ohio, and it showed in his politics. He returned to Washington time and time again not because of his ability to fundraise, but because of his ability to pass meaningful legislation. Some of his greatest victories included: the section 13 summer school lunch program, the predecessor amendment to the Americans with Disabilities Act, Great Lakes pollution clean-up, a Cuyahoga Valley National Park, the original CAFE legislation, tax reform measures and Social Security and Medicare improvements.

When Charlie passed away late last month, the United States lost one of its greatest leaders. However, Charlie's legacy can be seen in the 110th Congress as we continue to protect our delicate environment for future generations, guarantee all of our Nation's children receive the care they need, and ensure that all people receive adequate healthcare and can retire with security. As one of his former staffers—and later one of mine—Bill Vaughan, recently wrote, "Like his black suit and bowtie, Mr. Vanik was a classic." Charlie was a one-of-a-kind leader and I hope today's generation of members can learn from his steadfast pursuit of policies that helped everybody in our Nation achieve the American Dream.